

THE DANCE OF THE VAMPIRES: A GOTHIC BALLAD WITH A HINT OF GARLIC.  
ADAPTATION BY TATYANA WILDS FROM *DANCE OF THE VAMPIRES*,  
A MUSICAL BY JIM STEINMAN

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Fine Arts.

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## ABSTRACT

This Thesis explores scenography for *Dance of the Vampires* (*Tanz der Vampire*, in German), a two act modern musical. This musical is by an American rock composer Jim Steinman, a German book by Michael Kunze, and an English translation by David Ives. The musical is based on Roman Polanski's film *The Fearless Vampire Killers* that was produced in 1964. *Dance of the Vampires* is a bittersweet Gothic ballad about love, passion and an eternal longing for immortality. Scenography is realized through set, costumes, lighting and projection designs. All designs are in Romantic Gothic style. The set for the show is an open modern space that contains limited scenery that is supported by projections. Romanian Folk clothes, Polanski's movie, and the various production of *Tanz der Vampire* in Germany influenced the costume designs; Marc Chagall's paintings were a source for the color palette. Lighting for the show was inspired by modern rock operas and musicals.

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“One of the things that we were trying to do with this show was the complexity of relationships and love. There is both passion and longing and a bittersweet quality to it that is a part of life.”  
~ Tim Burton, *Tim Burton's Corpse Bride: An Invitation to the Wedding*.

## INTRODUCTION

Finding a perfect script for my thesis was not an easy task. I knew I wanted to design for a romantic musical or opera. It was not only about finding a story that would speak to me but mostly about finding a musical score that would inspire me. I had the same sensations toward music in the production as a famous Russian-born theatre artist Aleksandr Benois (1870-1960) had. Benois wrote that music is capable of evoking in him “the strongest emotions and agitations, and in his theatrical activities it is precisely music which has giving birth to the most felicitous ideas and supported him in the creative process.” (Janet Kennedy, 341) I also wished for the project to be based on a contemporary international script that is connected to the topic of my interest – globalization and popular culture. Last, but not least, I needed a piece that was unknown to me and to my audience.

*Dance of the Vampires (Tanz der Vampire, in German)* is a two act modern musical written by an American rock composer Jim Steinman, with a German book by Michael Kunze, and an English translation by David Ives. The musical is based on Roman Polanski’s tragi-comical film *The Fearless Vampire Killers* that was produced in 1964 in the United Kingdom. The first premiere of the musical took place in Vienna, Austria in 1997. Roman Polanski himself directed the show. In the production the lead role of Count Von Krolock was portrayed by a beloved American actor-singer Steve Barton. Barton performed this part until his death in 2001. Currently the musical is still a success and is

staged around Europe, and also in Russia and Japan. Captivating and inspiring melodies of Jim Steinman's ballads such as *Total Eclipse of the Heart* and *Original Sin* are embroidered into the musical score of *Dance of the Vampires*.

*Dance of the Vampires* is a bittersweet Gothic ballad about love, passion and an eternal longing for immortality. The action of the musical takes place in a nineteenth-century remote Transylvanian village mostly populated by jolly Jewish farmers. The fearless Professor Abronsius and his apprentice Alfred arrived in the village in search of the vampires. At the local Inn owned by Chagal, the innkeeper, Alfred meets Chagal's fair daughter Sarah. While the professor and Alfred are trying to fight vampires in the Count Von Krolock's estate, beautiful Sarah has to make a difficult decision. Sarah has to choose between passionate but simple young Alfred and a striking and seductive but brooding count. She has to choose between mortal and eternal life. But her destiny is not in her hands any more...

Global popular culture is fascinated with the vampire theme. There are numerous novels; movies, such as *Dracula*, *The Twilight Saga*, *Interview with a Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles*, *Van Helsing*, *Night Watch*; TV series, such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Angel*, *Supernatural*, *True Blood*, *Torchwood*, *Dracula*; and Japanese manga and anime series, such as *Vampire Knight*, *Hellsing*, *Moon Phase* made about vampires. The Japanese manga and anime series *Dance in the Vampire Bund* is loosely based on the musical *Dance of the Vampires*. In his book *The Gothic-fantastic in Nineteenth-century Russian Literature* Neil Cornwell writes that the vampire subculture emerged out of

“Gothic” (a graveyard art) culture that stems from the eighteenth-century England. Cornwell says that, typically, the “classical Gothic” is “set at some temporal and spatial distance and in a castle or manorial locale; defense, or usurpation, of an inheritance will threaten (and not infrequently inflict) violence upon hapless (usually female) victims amid a supernatural ambiance.” (Cornwell, 7) According to Cornwell one of the variations of classic Gothic plot is the establishing of a philosophical, occult or religious system of dualism. This system allows “the ‘existence’ of demonic emissaries, revenants, demon lovers, sylphs or salamanders, and confirm contact or ‘correspondence’ between the two worlds...” (Cornwell, 7-8) A genre of literature that depicts this realm is called “Romantic Gothic.” Cornwell writes that “Romantic Gothic” was originated in Germany. Obviously the musical *Dance of the Vampires* falls under the “Romantic Gothic” category. And, of course, a great contribution to the musical’s success is that the musical was first staged in German and its composer, James Richard “Jim” Steinman, is a songwriter/producer whose records have sold more than 100 million copies, was described by the L.A. Times as "the Richard Wagner of rock. Jim Steinman has written the musical in the Gothic Rock ballad style. The show currently is in its 17th year of selling out in Europe.

In *The Darkling: A Treatise of Slavonic Vampirism* Jan Louis Perkoweski traces the origin of the vampire myth to specifically Slavic culture. Growing up in the former Soviet Union I have read a poem *Vurdalak* in *Songs of the Western Slavs* by Alexander Pushkin and his novel *Upyr* (“upir” and “vampir” Russian words for vampire). Pushkin’s works were based on oral sources. According to these oral sources Eastern Slavs believed

vampires are lowlife vicious creatures that can be only killed with a wooden stake. In Polanski's movie all the vampires are comical but creepy, and absolutely far from being noble. Those characteristics are influenced by the director's Polish background. The modern popular culture divides vampires into two categories. One is where vampires are mostly beautiful and romantic creatures doomed to suffer with an endless appetite for blood through eternity. Another is where vampires are simple, comical but scary lowlife forms. These two categories of vampires are in the Steinman's musical. I had two choices for the show design concept - to design a dark romance or a comedy. I made a decision to design a gothic romance with a "hint of garlic," a drama with a bit of comedy to it. This choice of the concept allowed me to portray the villagers and some of the Krolock's household members in the way that the Slavic people would see them.

In her book *What is Scenography?* Pamela Howard writes: "The world view of scenography reveals that the space is the first and most important challenge for a scenographer." (Howard, 1) *Dance of the Vampires* is a very challenging musical to design. There is a specific nineteenth century setting but the music and the topic have a contemporary sensibility. There are also two acts with a prolog and eighteen scenes in them. I viewed a few modern musicals, such as *A Chorus Line*, *Kinky Boots*, and *We Will Rock You*; rock operas, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Rock of Ages*; and the latest rendition of *Carmen*. Also I was fascinated with Matthew Bourne's Gothic rewrite of the ballet-classics, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake*. Bourne's "Gothic Fairy Tale" about an enchanted princess begins in the 1890s and ends in 2012. This kind of ending could be possible in the last act of *Dance of the Vampires*.

I believe in the modern theatre the performing space should be more like a concert space. The set has to be portable and the emphasis should be on technical equipment, such as lights, movie and projections. The Twenty-first Century audience is likely to accept and understand a musical production that is equipped with digital sound and visual effects. After months of research I knew I want to design a space that is visually attractive, modern and convertible. I also want to mention that beside my emphasis toward technology I always remember what Robert Edmond Jones ones said about the aim of stage designing. In his book, *The Dramatic Imagination. Reflections and Speculations on the Art of Theatre*, he said the aim is “to bring to audience in to the atmosphere of theme and thought. Any device will be acceptable so long as it is succeeds in carrying the audience along with it.” (Jones, 139)

As an international artist and designer I want to design for the global spectators. I want to be able to bring a show, such as *Dance of the Vampires*, that is written by a European director and an American composer, and successful in Europe, across the ocean. I want to add my own touch and understanding to the show design but keep its original roots, sound and sense. The set will be an open space that is easy to transform. I knew while designing sets I want to follow the design principals of one of scenography’s innovators, international designer Ralph Koltai. In the book *Ralph Koltai: Designer for the Stage* Jon Hapier sites Koltai’s designer’s concept “pure design is about the manipulation of abstract objects in space in order to give that space an atmosphere of mood that enhances the nature of what’s happening in that space. It’s not about pictorial representation but about placing things in such a way that the audience will believe in what is going on.”

(Backemeyer, 13) I decided not to limit *Dance of the Vampires* to a particular historic place but keep a nineteen-century European touch to the space I design. There will be a dark forest with a graveyard, a jolly village and a gloomy castle, a beautiful but strong-minded heroine, smart but sloppy academics, and a magnificent and vindictive count that has an endless appetite for love. There will be a great presence of the actors as whatever character they are playing in this supernatural story. Action would happen on stage and in the audience. The orchestra will be open. I want the musicians to be seen and to be a part of the show. There will be a bridge above the orchestra that connects the audience and the stage. The LED dance floor will be able to change its color depending on the scene.

The *Berliner Zeitung*, a German Newspaper, wrote about the *Dance of the Vampires* ' World-Premiere in Vienna in 1997: "Roman Polanski has just launched the best-ever German musical... the show has few equals in its genre..." The *Magyar Nemzet*, a major Hungarian newspaper, described the 2007 Hungarian production of the musical:

"Jim Steinman understands how to excite, enchant and terrify an audience... choir dances provide an exciting spectacle, enthralling audiences with their infernal beauty, making them shiver. From the graves the vampires crawl out with stiff, angular movements, which turn into an increasingly wild dance carnival, making for an expressiveness beyond any previously seen dance macabre. The choreographer behind them is the fantastic American artist Dennis Callahan, who created the choreographies of the previous Vampire-musicals as well. The vampires' costume ball, and then the explosively temperamental group dance arrangements, each with a very distinctive character, with dancers subsequently dressed in disco outfits and black lacquer boots, turned into three of the best scenes of the show... There is a mixture of majestic luxury and decay swirling about on the ghostly stage enveloped in darkness."

This is a colorful, emotional and dynamic musical. As a scenographer in order to design a creative and suitable space, costumes, lights, and digital imagery for the *Dance of the*

*Vampires* production I had to be an artist who “understands text as a writer” (Howard, XXV), and a director who leads the show and understands the needs and purpose of each actor in the show.

## TEXT VERSES THE SCORE

I think Pamela Howard gave a perfect description of the connection between text and design. She wrote: “The scenographer visually liberates the text and the story behind it, by creating a world in which the eyes see what the ears do not hear. Resonances of the text visualized through fragments and memories that reverberate in the spectator’s subconscious, suggesting rather than illustrating the words. Plays transcend geographical boundaries, and are appreciated and understood in their original language as well as in translation, and belong not to nations but to audiences.” (Howard, 49) I had a challenging but exciting task to decide on what version of the *Dance of the Vampires*’ libretto I would base my design for the thesis. I resolved to accumulate my own script that was based on the original *Tanz der Vampires* book by Michael Kunze, Polanski’s movie and the 2002 Broadway version of the musical. A review of the film *Fearless Vampire Killers* gave me an idea about the mood and complexity of the piece. I could emotionally relate to the costumes and settings in the movie because of my Eastern-European background and experience. The original Vienna production and later Berlin productions translated Polanski’s story into a gothic romance that was told via sensual lyrics through beautiful voices and Wagner’s style orchestration. The Broadway script provided me with a translation of the songs, with an idea of the reasonable number of scenes and with a descriptive list of the characters.



I decided to add to my lists of scenes the Prologue and the Heilderberg scenes from the Broadway production of the musical. I thought that the Prologue gives a reasonable establishment for the Sarah- Krolock tragic romance. It is not like in the movie where the count just comes to bite Sarah's neck for the sake of the prophecy to be fulfilled and for him and his flock to survive. In the movie I could see Sarah's boredom with her present life and her longing for something new, exciting and, I could say, also dangerous.

Krolock knows Sarah's dreams. He sings to her: "Your dreams are so hungry..." (*Dance of the Vampires*, Prologue) The chilling Krolock's statement "God has left the building" provided me with the mood of the whole show - there is no redemption for Sarah and the count in the finale. During the Scene One, titled Heilderberg, Professor Abronsus comically tells his loyal student Alfred about going into a great wilderness to the "...village of vampires. In the last place you'd ever expect a vampire: Transylvania." He also explains the reason why they should go there simultaneously to his pupil and to the spectators. Because of those two scenes the mood and the settings of the story of the musical will be well defined for the audience during the show.

Text is very important for me as a designer. I love poetry and good lyrics. I was inspired to design for this show by listening to Steve Barton's performance of the *Total Eclipse of the Heart* (1983) and *Original Sin* (1989) written by Jim Steinman. These two ballads provide the main themes for *Dance of the Vampires*. I want to conclude this chapter with a piece from Steinman's ballad, *Original Sin*. I think this quote is a key to the whole concept of the musical *Dance of the Vampires*:

"I've been looking for an original sin  
One with a twist and a bit of a spin

And since I've done all the old ones  
Till they've all been done in  
Now I'm just looking  
Then I'm gone with the wind  
Endlessly searching for an original sin

You can dance forever  
You got a fire in your feet  
But will it ever be enough? ...”

## THE DESIGN

### SPACE

I wanted to design a set for the touring show that will be easy to assemble, have a limited amount of scenery but provide enough space for numerous actions and dancing. I aspired to follow Robert Edmond Jones’s idea about the stage setting. He writes, “The purpose of a stage setting, whatever its form, whether it be for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, ... , scene indivisible or poem unlimited, it is simply this: *to remind the audience of where the actors are supposed to be*. A true stage-setting is an invocation of the *genius loci* – a gesture “enforcing us to the this place” – and nothing more.” (Jones, 138) I decided to keep in mind the pervading spirit of a place, *genius loci* (Latin), while drawing my set. The set I designed is open to the viewers. I wanted the actors to be able to come to the stage from the audience and through the audience. I placed stairs that connect the auditorium and the stage. I also opened the orchestra pit and laid a bridge above the orchestra for the actors to walk across to the stage. I planned for the musicians to be visible to the public and also to be a part of the show. A false proscenium arch was designed to establish mood and a place for action in the musical. It looks like an old black lace or web, the remains of the old glory of the Von

Krolock's clan. I based my design of the proscenium on the sample of the precision cut drop that was made from Encore Velour and Tiger Gauze Netting that I found through the Rose Brand company website at [www.rosebrand.com](http://www.rosebrand.com). The bridge and the downstage floor I designed as a dance floor. I found a perfect solution for the floor cover - the LED tile that was produced for dance floors and could display various colors and imagery depending on the scene change. The floor is also reasonably raked.

The center stage has a grand stair that leads to the elevated platform with a walk. The center stage acting area partially surrounded with tall walls that are higher than the proscenium arch. The multi-functional grand stair allows for the actions to unfold. It represents a walk to Krolock's magnificent but gloomy castle as well as various stairs inside the castle. The stair also has enough space for the dancers' movements. Three walls that surround the platform are sixteen feet tall. The vertical lines give the appeal of the gothic castle with a very high ceiling that disappears into the depth of the grid. The walls are covered with muslin and painted in gray stone texture. This texture provides spectators with a feel of the medieval building and also provides a nice background for the projected images. To establish the needed environment I used flying scenery such as three sets of arches. One set of three has shorter arches with wooden texture for the Inn, then a second set of three slim and tall emerald textured arches for the gothic castle, and a third unit contains a single grey stone textured gothic arch for the crypt. I left large open spaces on stage left and stage right for the scenery props to be easily stored in order to be moved on and off stage.

The front wall has two rows of windows that are covered with sliding shutters that face the upstage. The shutters can be closed, opened or half-closed when needed. There are three windows and a door on the stage right and stage left walls. During the second act the front wall windows and one side window on each sidewall represent the Krolock's family portrait gallery (Fig. 1). The window frames are actual golden antique frames. The actors pose in the window frames as ancestors that come alive at night. They all come down to the grand room of the castle to perform a ghoulish dance at night. I designed special walks behind the grand wall to accommodate safe passages for cast and crew. There are also two doors on each side of the elevated platform. All the doors are designed to provide exit/entrance during chasing scenes and also give an opportunity to the actors for majestic entrances or exits.



**Fig. 1.** Scenery. Act II, Scene 1.

There is a wall that connects the dance floor platform with the elevated platform that is visible on both sides of the grand stairs. The wall represents the castle's crypt and has three doors on each side. The trap doors designed to fall open when the dead rise from their graves and also if the characters need a way in and out of the castle. The platform and grand stairs are painted in old grey marble texture. The crypt wall looks like it was

made of grey stone. There is also a grand sliding door on the central part of the front wall. When this grand door opens representing an entrance to the castle during the musical, a lighter iron staircase becomes visible through the opening. Von Krolock comes down this stairway when he needs to make his grand entrance. The undead and ancestors also use these stairs. The three sets of gradually situated stairs on the set give the feel of the height of the mountains and castle walls, and also of depth of the castle and its crypt. Basically my set contains four levels. First is the house and the fourth is the upper portraits' row.

I am a scenographer but I am also a fine artist. My goal was to create scenography for Dance of the Vampires that will be considered as a work of fine art. A work that contains creative pieces of scenery enhanced with the help of lights and projections. I designed four scrims in order to achieve my goal. First scrim is a disturbing black silhouette of a giant tree that is cut out of 1/4-inch thick plywood luan. The tree is present during Act I, Prologue and Scene 1; and Act 2, Scene 10.



**Fig. 2.** Scenery. Act I, Scene 2.

Second see-through scrim made of gauze depicts a silver-blue scenery of an old cemetery at dusk (Fig. 2). This scrim comes down during Prologue and Act 2, Scene 10. Layers of

the false proscenium and these two scrims create illusionary depth on stage and melancholy but beautiful environment. The fourth scrim is a LED mesh curtain that provides a see-through atmospheric feel such as starry sky or magical dreamy dust during romantic and night scenes. The forth scrim can be a LED curtain or a projection muslin scrim that serves as a background for the entire set. In order to convert the set in to a castle I also drew black silhouettes of two identical oversized antique chandeliers that are cut out of ¼-inch thick plywood luan. The last piece of flying scenery is an oversized wooden window frame with screen mesh instead glass. The window comes down during the scenes in which Krolock appears in Sarah's bedroom.

Jarka Burian cited Josef Svoboda's statement in his book *The Scenography of Josef Svoboda*: "Knowledge of the technical makes creativity possible." (Burian, 23) I prepared a set of the projections to complete the scenery. I knew I needed projections of the interior and exterior of the Inn, interior and exterior of Von Krolock's castle, and an old gothic cemetery at dusk. During my research I found images of Romanian and some of the Transylvanian the Eighteenth Century and earlier Nineteenth Century castles and Inns on the Internet. I also found books that contained information about gothic architecture and art, such as *Great Buildings of the World: Castles of Europe* by Geoffrey Hindley and *Medieval Art* by Marilyn Stokstad. But my wish was to create images for the projections that are representative of an idea of a certain place without realistically describing it. In her book Stokstad discussed that farmsteads lying outside the town's walls had large half-timbered buildings. (Stokstad, 336) On the same page she also wrote that during the Late Gothic period "a castle became a garrison headquarters, supply

depot, and a symbol of power and authority.” I knew that the Inn interior needed to have stucco walls and a wooden ceiling, and also a lot of swags made of garlic. For the Inn exterior projection I created an image that represents only a part of an exterior of an old Romanian rural structure.

Count Kalnoky’s charming and unique castle in Transylvania provided me with an inspiration for the Inn’s interior and exterior projections and also for the castle’s interior image. For the castle’s exterior image my inspiration came from the Peles castle in Sinaia, Romania. On the projection the old ghostly castle is just a reminder of the past glories (Fig. 3). The atmosphere on the set should feel antihuman. Castle’s rooms also should have dust and spider webs.



**Fig. 3.** Projection of the castle’s interior on the wall.  
Act I, Scene 7.

I decided to have only a limited number of the set props. The props included a grand bed, Sarah’s bed and Magda’s bed; a small antique standing tub; standing mirror; a large wooden table, a wooden bench and a wooden stool; two identical candelabras; and a wooden coffin. The grand bed, Sarah’s bed, and the mirror will be used during Act I and Act II. In Act II the second set of bed coverings will be used. The bedcovers in the Inn

should be clean and cheerful. The bedcovers in the castle should be antique, elegant but worn down.

## COSTUMES

One of my favorite quotations about Theatre is the one by Mark Chagall: "I adore the theater and I am a painter. I think the two are made for a marriage of love. I will give all my soul to prove this once more." I found my inspiration for the costume designs in Mark Chagall's paintings and in Susan Hilferty's marvelously flamboyant costumes that she designed for *Wicked*. I also found the costumes from *Fiddler on the Roof* were very helpful to look at because the ethnic background and similar settings – a Jewish village in Eastern Europe. In his book *Chagall* Gill Polonsky traced roots of Chagall's spiritual symbolism to Hasidic mysticism (Hasidism is a Jewish religious movement that "associates with singing, dancing and the spontaneous outpouring of emotions." (Polonsky, 6) I saw that the Innkeeper, Chagal, has this kind of spirit in him in *Dance of the Vampires*. Chagall's shimmering paintings "where logic was overturned by magic and metamorphosis, where reality became myth, and where the world gave way to the image" (Polonsky, 7) and his jewel color palette were very appropriate for the show. They became a source for my designs' color pallet. I was trained as an illustrator, graphic artist and digital animator. I sketch my costumes first in pencil, then outline the sketches with ink; and finish renderings by coloring them in Photoshop. Professor Nick Hunt in his "Alternative materialities: Scenography in digital performance" argues that digital technologies may serve as tools to support a practitioner's creative process, or to help solve the pragmatic problems of staging. (Hunt, 5)



The costumes I designed for *Dance of the Vampires* are separated into four groups. The first group is called *Core Characters*. This group includes Sarah and Sarah Dancer, Alfred and Alfred Dancer, Professor Abronsus, Chagal, Rebecca, Magda, and Koukol. I wanted these characters to look like the Polanski's movie characters. In other words I based my designs on the movie and Rumanian folk clothes; and designed them in the late Eighteenth Century fashion. Professor Abronsus, Chagal and Rebecca wear dark palette costume pieces. Abronsus wears a black wool coat, black pants and a black top hat. He has a grey vest and a long grey scarf. He looks very gentlemen like and academic. But his messy grey hair and huge mustache are comical. Chagal, the Innkeeper, also has a black merchant style wool coat with a lot of pockets, black boots and a black cap, but grey stripped pants and a warm long greyish-black scarf, and a brown vest. His wife Rebecca dresses in a dark blue silk blouse, black velvet skirt, black boots, and often puts a grey shawl on her shoulders or head. She wears a large stained kitchen apron while at the store. In contrast to her husband she never smiles.

Costumes for Sarah, Alfred, and Magda have much more vibrant color combinations. Alfred, Professor Abronsus' student, looks cheerful like he just came down off the fairytale's page. I designed him in a wine jacket, blue shirt, red polka dot cravat, tan knee pants and red knee socks. He also has a black student cap, a blue-grey knee-length coat and brown boots. Alfred-Dancer I dressed in tan pants, blue shirt, black lace knee socks and black boots. Sarah has red hair and fair skin. She wears a light beige skirt, blouse, petticoat and reddish-brown corset. She is kept inside the Inn but when she is finally out she puts on a shawl. For Sarah-Dancer's costume I kept the color pallet but designed a

shorter skirt and tall red boots instead the corset. Magda, a servant girl and Chagal's lover, dresses in folk clothes. She has light blue skirt, white blouse, brown corset and brown sleeveless jacket. I also added a large stained apron to her costume. In contrast to Rebecca's apron Magda's apron has colorful embroidery.

The last character in this group is a mysterious and frightening hunchback Koukol. His outfit is very old and dirty. I sketched a grey-haired figure in a long greyish-lavender shirt, grey pants and grey boots that are secured with pieces of cloth. He wears an old, and torn in many places, animal skin coat and an animal skin hat. His teeth are long and protruding and eyes are red.

My second costume group I called *Vampires*. I designed these costumes in Gothic style. Von Korlock's costume; Sarah's ballroom costume; Von Krolock's son Herbert's two costumes; Professor Abronsius' ballroom costume; Alfred's ballroom costume; and four costumes of the vampires, men and women, at the ball are in the group. Von Krolock is magnificent. His hair is long and silver, and skin is pale; his fingers covered with silver rings and his nails are long and also silver. He wears a red knee-length coat; grey hip-length vest; silver shirt; lace cravat and cuffs; high silver boots; and a black shimmery cape. His homosexual son Herbert is very beautiful, with long blond hair and pale skin. He wears his first costume – a long beautiful blue shirt, lavender pants, and black shoes with silver buckles, when he meets Alfred for the first time. His second, a ballroom outfit, is stunning. I drew a sparkling silver-lavender-blue knee-length coat that is adorned with lace cravat and cuffs; a knee-length silver vest, and silver-blue riding boots

for this costume. I wanted him to shine like a jewel when he enters the ballroom. Krolock and his son have fake canine teeth.

According to the movie and the musical's script Sarah's ballroom dress had to be outstanding. I really enjoyed working on this costume. I looked at the dress in *Fearless Vampire Killers*, and also at the few other costumes from various productions of the musical and at modern gothic costumes; and came up with my own variation of the dress and the costume parts (Fig. 4).



**Fig. 4.** Sarah's ballroom costume.

Sarah's red curls are elaborately arranged in the Nineteenth Century's hairstyle. Her dress is made of red silk fabric, delicately embellished with flowers, with creamy-colored inserts. The dress is decorated with black wings, black bows and black lace. I designed her red boots having in mind an image of beautiful period red boots I found on the Internet. For this costume I also gave Sara a black, lace and ribbon, petticoat and long red gloves. All guests and the public should be astonished when she appears on top of the stairs during the ballroom scene.

For Alfred's and the Professor's ballroom costumes I used images from the Polanski's movie costumes as an inspiration and also examples of the Baroque costumes for men

that I found in *Survey of Historic Costumes* written by Phyllis G. Tortora and Keith Eubank (Tortora, 250, 255, 261 and 272). Their characters are very funny in these costumes. Alfred also keeps his knee pants, red knee socks and brown scholar's boots while at the ball. The guest-vampires' costumes are based on Renaissance and Baroque periods but colors are faded and fabrics are torn and dirty. They all look ghoulish but slightly comical at the same time.

The villagers are in the third group called *Peasants*. The color pallet is colorful but simple. Peasants #1 and #2 are dressed in the villagers' outfits that are unclean and old with patches. Boris has nicer and clean clothes and boots. Young women, Nadia and Sza-Sza, dressed in costumes that I based on Transylvanian Folk Outfits. They both cover their heads with head-shawls and have unique local style footwear. Besides, Sza-Sza's costume has elements of Romanian Gypsy folk outfit.

The forth group is the vampires' costumes for the Finale. This is the scene when all vampires, dressed in contemporary disco costumes, perform a victory dance. Von Krolock changes his first costume to his second for the ballroom scene and stays in this costume for the finale. He keeps his black pants, cravat and cuffs, but wears a black sparkling tailcoat, greyish-black vest, and black dressy shoes. All the vampires dressed in black leather-like fabric, black rocker's boots and see-through shirts. Women wear black lace pantyhose, black corsets, black jackets, black miniskirts of different shapes and styles, and black boots and shoes. For their costumes I would also use leather-like fabrics

and black lace fabrics. All vampires are very pale with red eyes and red lips. They all also have fake canine teeth.

#### LIGHTS

While studying Film and, later, Scenography at the University of Kansas; and also after spending a summer semester at Rose Bruford College in London, England, I developed a passion toward lighting design. I feel similar to what well-known lighting designer Kenneth Posner felt. He wrote, "I thought I might be a costume designer. In college I discovered light as an artistic medium, as a device to paint and sculpt with. I enjoyed the lighting designer's job of creating environments and mood..." To design lights I had to design my set first. After weeks of research and sketches I build a 3D model of all units and scenes for *Dance of the Vampires* in Cinema 4D program. This model gave me an opportunity to experiment with lighting effects and also helped me with my actual model-making process.

I had the good fortune to see Tharon Musers' *A Chorus Line* in London, United Kingdom, last summer. I was amazed how clear, synchronized and smart the lighting was there. Later I learned from Professor Delbert Unruh' book *The Design of Tharon Musser* about this famous lighting designer, her life and her work. Tharon Musser's light plots became a high standard for me. In his book Unruh cites about Tharon's designs that "light was a living entity that moves in time and space, as did the drama. Like the light plot, every cue had a specific purpose in visual communication and understanding of the play and performance for the audience." (Unruh, 59)

I drew a lighting storyboard before I drafted a lighting plot. The lighting storyboard helped me to visualize how I can create mood and atmosphere for *Dance of the Vampires*. There is only one outdoor morning scene in the show, the rest of the action set at dusk and at night. During the prologue the lights are blue and a misty. In the Inn scene warm lights make the set look like candles and fireplace light it. For the scenes that depict Krolock's castle exterior I designed ghostly atmosphere with the help of fog and shimmering LED curtain. For the scenes that depict Krolock's grand room and portrait gallery inside the castle I lighted the areas with a blue-green color palette. But Sarah's bedroom in the castle has a sunlight beam shining through an imaginary window. The crypt is gloomy and grey but there is blue moonlight that emanates through the upper windows. I intended to position two follow spots on the balcony that will be used during the chase scenes, the crypt scene and the Finale. For the ballroom scene I designed bright amber-orange lights that cast purple shadows. There are two oversized chandeliers and two candelabras on the set during this scene. Final dance scene I drew in front of the black with red flares background. The dancing floor and the cast are brightly illuminated. I planned for the audience at the finale to feel like they are at a rock concert with fog and moving lights present.

## CONCLUSION

I could not agree more with Josef Svoboda when he said: "True scenography is what happened when the curtain opens and can't be judged in any other way." (Burian, 15) It was a hard but exciting journey working on my scenography for *Dance of the Vampires*. Developing a concept for the musical was the most difficult task in this designing

process. I also had to learn more about the art of model making. I could see how during my studies at the Department of the Theatre at the University of Kansas I learned a great deal about the fine art of the theatre and the technical side to it. I worked hard and I am proud about this accomplishment. I designed modern nonrealistic space, the imaginary world for the gothic musical personages. I also designed props, costumes, lights and projections for the show. From the beginning I wanted my work to be original but resemble the original movie and musical and I think I succeeded.

I would like to conclude my paper with the words of world-known scenographer Tony Walton: “I believe in entertainment. To me, entertainment is a sacred word.” (Unruh, *The Designs of Tony Walton*, 111) I too believe that entertainment is sacred. It is a powerful social and spiritual tool. It was a rewarding experience working on this musical. This work gave me the possibility to explore international and American theatre; meet international designers and study their work; learn about international writers, performers and musicians. As an international designer and artist, I hope my designs will inspire people to learn more about the global theatre, performance arts and world cultures.

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## DSIGNER'S PROPS

1. Bench.

Order at: [http://rusticbilliards.com/white\\_cedar\\_log\\_pool\\_tables.htm](http://rusticbilliards.com/white_cedar_log_pool_tables.htm)

2. Bed (Alfred's).

Hampton Modern Rustic Bed, order at:

[http://www.westernpassion.com/p\\_5400-1283.html](http://www.westernpassion.com/p_5400-1283.html)

3. Bed (Sarah's).

Reclaimed Timber Pioneer Bed, order at:

<http://www.blueridgelogfurniture.com/reclaimedbeds.php>

4. Bed (Magda's).

Reclaimed Timber Pioneer Bed, order at:

<http://www.blueridgelogfurniture.com/reclaimedbeds.php>

5. Table.

Order at: <http://www.woodlandcreekfurniture.com/rustic-furnishings/outdoor-furniture.html>

6. Wooden bar stool

7. Standing wooden frame mirror.

Cooper Classics 68in x 26.5in Floor Standing Mirror, order at:

<http://www.lowes.com>

8. Free-standing tub

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